

Summary of Feedback from Focus Group Participants

The Michigan Center for Nursing, a program of the Michigan Health Council, is developing a Michigan Nursing Career Guide. The purpose of the guide is to support the academic and professional advancement of nurses and help Michigan meet the goal of 80 percent of registered nurses holding a bachelor's degree in nursing. The guide comprises a career planning toolkit, a nursing education database, career coaching modules, an interprofessional collaborative practice (IPCP) education module, and a component on diversity in the nursing workforce. The center sought input about the Michigan Nursing Career Guide through four focus groups held with nurses in different cities across the state: Bay City, Grand Rapids, Livonia, and Traverse City. Michigan Health Council staff presented each component of the guide and participants were asked to share their reactions and suggestions for improvements on the content and layout of each component. This document summarizes the feedback received regarding the education module on IPCP. Some direct quotes are included as examples of the comments made by participants during the discussions.

IPCP Education Module

The education module is designed to assist nurses and other health care professionals in understanding the basic concepts of team-based care. The course highlights traits and characteristics of high-performing and collaborative teams, best practices for effective team members, and team-based strategies for reducing errors.

The course identifies the benefits of IPCP for both patients and practice, and also discusses the IPCP core competencies: values and ethics, roles and responsibilities, interprofessional communication, and teamwork. Review questions are dispersed throughout the course, designed to reinforce the concepts and check for understanding.

The course objectives are to help individuals learn:

- The tangible benefits of IPCP for both patients and practice
- The key drivers behind team-based, IPCP
- Traits, characteristics, and best practices of high-performing, effective teams
- Values and ethics of interprofessional practice
- Team member roles and responsibilities
- The importance of embracing overlap in roles and responsibilities; everybody is responsible for everything
- Components of effective team communication, as well as strategies for ensuring effective interprofessional communication
- Examples of communication failures and how to prevent them

The course is different from a basic slide show in that it includes a clickable table of contents, interactive buttons with additional information, and opportunities to learn more on many of the slides. Users may rewind to the beginning of the course and move backward or forward through the presentation.

Focus Group Reactions and Suggestions

Participants in each of the focus groups were asked what additional explanation or simplification is needed in the IPCP education module, what supplemental resources could be linked to the module, and how the value of collaborative practice might be better conveyed.

General Reactions

The IPCP education module could be useful to all nurses, from first-year nursing students to experienced practicing nurses.

Some participants from academic institutions suggested that the module could be used early in the curriculum for nursing students, making it part of orientation or using it as an extra resource for class discussions about teamwork in a med-surg class during their first year. Some noted that information on team-based care is becoming part of many nursing education programs. As one participant said:

We want everybody to get this message. We are trying to build an understanding of team-based care for all our students.

Several practicing nurses in the focus groups said they are already using a team-based approach in their organizations and emphasizing the importance of communication with other health professionals. Some said the module could be used as a staff development tool, along with other tools and resources they are currently using.

We use a variety tools to grow staff members to step up and say something; it's ongoing, not a onetime hit.

Most risk events are related to communication. We have to help [our staff nurses] with communication and crucial conversations. We have to get them these skills, regardless what area they work in nursing.

We're established nurses. This [module] would help us identify for ourselves the attributes we're looking to move forward across disciplines to accomplish our goals.

The appearance and amount of content in the IPCP education module might be overwhelming.

One participant said if she was looking at the module from a student perspective, it would be overwhelming and she would skip it. In another focus group, the first comment made by a participant after the module was presented was that "people might be scared off by the quiz." Another said, "The navigator along the side is going to freak people out."

Suggestions for Improvement

Simplify the layout and navigation in the module.

Participants offered the following specific suggestions:

- Explain upfront that the review questions are optional.

- Minimize the navigator bar, or provide viewers with an option to hide it and bring it back. Viewers need to be able to skip around within the module.
- Separate the module into pieces, and begin with an introduction that includes clear instructions on how to use the module, and then break the components down to make it feel more manageable. This would allow viewers to go to the section that is most applicable to them at that moment.
- Tell the viewer how many slides there are and how long it is going to take to complete each section in the module.
- When voice narration is added to the module, provide an option to skip the narration and click through the slides.

Consider creating different sections in the module for students and practicing nurses.

One participant said some of the key concepts could be pulled out in a student section, while the whole module might be used by a professional working to establish a collaborative practice environment. One student nurse participant, however, said she would not complete the education module online because the material is already covered thoroughly in her course work.

Provide continuing education credit or contact hours for completing the IPCP education module.

Many participants said attaching contact hours would be a good way to get nurses to complete the module.

Include information in the module that might help teams achieve collaborative practice.

A few participants raised the concern that policies and the environment within a health care organization may not be supportive of collaborative practice. They wondered if any information could be included in the module to help nurses and other team members address the barriers to collaborative practice within their organizations.

Supplemental Resources

When participants were asked what supplemental resources should be linked to the IPCP education module, a few identified the following potential resources:

- TeamSTEPPS[®], a program supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality and used at Beaumont Health System
- Crucial Conversations, used at Henry Ford Health System
- High Reliability Organizations, used at Oakwood Healthcare
- Midwest Interprofessional Practice, Education, and Research Center at Grand Valley State University
- National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education at the University of Minnesota

Conveying the Value of Collaborative Practice

Participants offered the following suggestions to better convey the value of IPCP through the education module:

- Include the evidence base for the effectiveness of team-based care on patient safety and outcomes; make a bulleted list of all the benefits and include links to the research for additional information.
- Demonstrate through evidence base reports that IPCP will make you a better nurse.
- Include some of the poor outcomes that have come to light if health care professionals don't practice collaboratively, such as poor patient satisfaction and health outcomes, and the ramifications on cost, overall quality, and reimbursements.
- Show that a team-based approach applies to both intra- and interprofessional practice; these same principles apply to working collaboratively with other nurses.
- Make it clear that a nurse cannot be an expert about all aspects of health care, such as drugs, but nurses can partner with experts like pharmacists that are available to help.
- Incorporate real-life examples or testimonials about the value of IPCP.
- Present a case study or scenario and show results for the patient based on how the health care team did or did not work collaboratively. The scenario might even be presented in a "choose your own adventure" format where the outcome is affected by selections the viewer makes about the way the team works together.
- Use short videos to present stories of things that happened—both good and bad—to tug at the viewer's heartstrings a little to convey the importance. Videos could also be used to show each of the core competencies in action.
- Build in a self-assessment quiz to help nurses recognize there is a deficit in team-based care in the health care system. We all think we do great team-based care, but in reality we are overrating ourselves.
- Create a discussion board where nurses and other health care professionals can post comments. It doesn't make sense to learn about team collaboration on your own; perhaps nurses would get more out of it if they could pose questions and share their comments with each other.
- Make the IPCP education module a required competency on the Alliance for Clinical Experience (ACE) system.